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Smokey's Volunteers Magazine

NEWS FROM THE TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS

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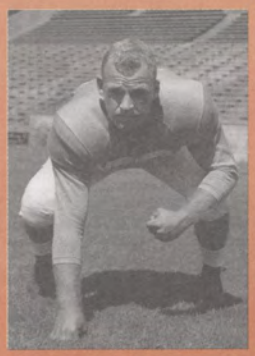

8 Bill Johnson speaks to seniors at banquet —BILL JOHNSON

SWIMMING AND DIVING AWARDS GIVEN OUT AT TEAM BANQUET

The University of Tennessee swimming and diving team, which recorded a fourth-place finish at the NCAA Championships in MArch, announced the 1997-98 team awards on May 3 at the team banquet.

Senior breaststroke swimmer Jeremy Linn, who won his fourth NCAA individual championship and his third SEC Swimmer of the Year Award this past season, was named as the squad's Most Outstanding Swimmer. Freshman Gabi Chereches, who set a school record in platform diving at the SEC Championships and earned All-America honors in three-meter and platform diving, received the Ken Hall Diving Award as the most valuable diver. Other traditional honors were awarded as follows: *Academic Award* - Adam Engle; *Most Improved Swimmer* - Zane DeWitt; *Most Improved Diver* - Chip Chiappetta; *Best All-Around Swimmer* - Matt Hall; *Roy Tateishi Most Dedicated Swimmer* - Casey Quilter; and *Mr. Clutch* - Tom Williams.

GREEN SIGNS CHATTANOOGA NATIVE

Tennessee head coach Jerry Green announced the signing of Harris Walker of Chattanooga to a national letter of intent on May 1.

Walker was Tennessee's Class AA Mr. Basketball last season, leading Brainerd High School to a 29-7 record and the semi-finals of the state tournament. Today's signing reunites Walker with his former Brainerd teammate C.J. Black, who will be a junior next season for the Vols.

"Harris Walker is an outstanding talent, who should help our already strong backcourt situation," Green said. "Signing the top players in Tennessee is one of the priorities of our program, and Harris has certainly been one of the best in our state the past two seasons. We look forward to working with him and having him in our basketball family at the University of Tennessee."

Walker joins Black, Brandon Wharton, Charles Hathaway, Aaron Green, Tony Harris, Del Baker and Vincent Yarbrough who were celebrated Tennessee high school players who decided to play at the University of Tennessee in the past four years.

Walker, a 6-1 guard, enjoyed a stellar high school career at Brainerd leading the Panthers to a four-year mark of 127-20 and becoming the school's all-time leading scorer with 1947 points while dishing out a school record 680 career assists. He is only one of three players to start all four years for Brainerd coach Robert High, who has coached 27 All-State players and won three state titles during his coaching career. Walker is also High's first three-time All-State and All-State Tournament player, who played in a school record 10 state tournament games, including two runner-up finishes in four seasons.

Last season Walker averaged 22.2 points per game in earning All-State honors for the third straight year. Walker, who played point-guard his first three seasons before moving to off-guard as a senior, scored a single-season record 798 points in 1997-98 and broke former prep All-America Malcolm Mackey's single-game school record with a 45-point performance during a holiday tournament in Alaska. Walker finished his senior campaign averaging 6.3 assists, 3.3 steals and 6.5 rebounds a contest.

NETTERS SIGN PETER HANDOYO

World class prospect Peter Handoyo, a native of Indonesia, will become a Vol in the fall as he signed scholarship papers with the University of Tennessee. Handoyo is currently ranked No. 20 in the world in singles and even higher in doubles. Handoyo won the 1997 U.S. Grass Court juniors, made the finals of the 1997 Eddie Herr Clay Court Championships and reached the 1997 U.S. Open junior quarterfinals. He has attended Dennis van de Meer's tennis academy in Hilton Head, S.C., since 1995.

"He's probably the best recruit we have signed in the history of UT, results wise. The fact he was recruited by most other SEC schools is a huge coup for us. It's a big proving thing to me," head coach Michael Fancutt said. "The thing that impressed me was his apparent ability to win under a whole bunch of different circumstances. That's a very impressive trait."

1998 Football Captains

Tennessee head football coach Phillip Fulmer announced the 1998 football captains. They are fullback Shawn Bryson, kicker Jeff Hall, linebacker Al Wilson, and offensive guard Mercedes Hamilton.

"I think all four of these young men will be good leaders by example, as well as vocally," said Fulmer. "They will be excellent spokesmen and, most importantly, be key factors in developing the personality of this team."

Fulmer noted some qualifications he looked for in prospective captains. "I like their work ethic, their character and toughness. I look forward to them being responsive to the honor bestowed on them and the demands that come with leadership."

Bryson, a native of Franklin, N.C., made the move from tailback to fullback last season. He responded by proving himself one of the Vols' most versatile performers. Bryson started in every contest and ranked fourth on the team with 29 receptions for 307 yards. An excellent backfield blocker, Bryson also contributed to the Vol offensive attack by toting the ball 36 times for 146 yards and two scores.

Hall has been named All-SEC in each of his three years at Tennessee. The Winchester native, who is a repeat performer on the All-SEC Academic Honor Roll with a 3.05 GPA in marketing, has connected on 141-147 career PAT tries and 42 of 65 field goal attempts. Last year, Hall posted a career best in field goal percentage (16-of-22 -- 72.7%) and pushed his career points scored to a total of 267. He currently ranks fourth on the school's all-time scoring list.

Wilson serves as the physical and emotional leader of the Tennessee defense. A Jackson native, he finished the 1997 campaign as the team's third-leading tackler with 83 stops. He riddled opposing offenses with 16 Big Plays, including three passes broken up, five sacks, and seven tackles for loss. With 195 total hits, Wilson leads the list of returning Vols on the career tackle chart.

Hamilton's play, meanwhile, has paced a steadily improving offensive line over the past two years. Last season, the Waynesboro, Ga., product started every game at right guard for the Vol offense. His adept blocking helped running back Jamal Lewis become the first UT true freshman to eclipse the 1,000-yard barrier for a single season. Also, Hamilton helped anchor an effort which yielded but 14 sacks in 492 passing attempts.

—Volunteers Magazine Staff

Smokey's Tale
Volunteers Magazine

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From the Editor

The majority of time spent learning in college is done in the classroom environment.

A Tuesday afternoon class in late April can feel like an eternity to many students at Tennessee. Hearing a lecture on why statistics are an important part of college education can last a lifetime.

But fortunately, not all education is like this. Many classes have the hands-on approach to learning. A walk up The Hill can find students studying plants in a greenhouse or chemistry students in a lab. A drive down Alcoa Highway shows the agricultural part of the University with research being done to produce higher quality food products.

Many hours are given by students in these programs to better their understanding of the subject they are studying.

Another such program where the students learn and the community also receives benefits comes by way of the Sport Management program in the College of Education. This program prepares people for a profession in the sports business. Whether it is running a community pool or assisting with the SEC Champion Tennessee football team, the students in this program are involved.

Part of the required curriculum is a practicum where a student works in some aspect of the sports profession. Work sites include all facets of the men's and women's athletic departments at the University of Tennessee. From the individual sports themselves to marketing, to compliance, there is an involvement from students.

But the limits of students contributions don't stop on campus. Professional sports teams, golf courses and other athletic facilities have also been sites where students have worked. Last year alone 82 students worked 4920 hours at the Nike Knoxville Open.

Now, to improve the program, *adidas* has pledge $22,500 in support over the next four years. "The Partners in Sports Program" shows adidas' desire to not only to contribute to Tennessee's success on the playing field but also in the classroom.

"The support of adidas will allow us to do so many more things in preparing our students for careers in the sports industry and to further develop relationships with the many sports agencies in the Knoxville area," said Dr. Buck Jones, associate professor in the Sport Management program.

The program will involve students in their field experiences and in professional organizations, both of which are essential in preparing for the job market.

The University of Tennessee's *adidas* representative, Marc Scales, said "adidas is delighted to join forces with the students at UT as adidas wants to show its interest in the entire university." He also hopes that adidas' contributions to the Sport Management program makes a statement to the sporting agencies in which Tennessee students work about adidas' commitment to sports in America.

An *adidas Partners in Sports Center* will be established with part of adidas' contributions. This center will give assistance to students in finding practicums and internships and will also provide support for completing tasks associated with their field experience.

The program plans to become self-sufficient in three years by seeking the support of graduates and grants from outside agencies as well as from the federal government.

Tennessee and adidas are partners both on the field and in the classroom.

—Rob Hardin

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Sonny Cortez Eyes the Record Books...

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE DIAMOND VOLS OUTFIELDER!

After the season's final regular season game, Sonny Cortez's statistics read 24 home runs, 87 runs batted in and a .387 batting average.

It has been one of the most productive years ever for a Tennessee Volunteer at the plate. These numbers make Cortez one of the most prolific hitters ever at Tennessee. What is even more impressive is the fact that he missed all of last season due to an injury.

While taking batting practice in preseason workouts last year, Cortez was hit on the wrist with an errant throw. He had surgery to repair the broken bones he had suffered. It was estimated that he would miss the first three weeks of the season. He would be back in time, though, for Southeastern Conference play.

Cortez battled back and was preparing to play the rest of the season. In preparation for this he was taking batting practice. During a bunting drill he was hit by a pitch. It was in the same spot that the first pitch had hit him, and he was out for the season.

It was time most people would have felt sorry for themselves. Cortez did at first, but then realized he could not let that happen.

"It dwelled up in me for a couple of weeks at first, and I felt sorry for myself," he said. "But then I looked at it as an opportunity to get better. During the down time, I worked out hard on the weights and studied the opposing pitchers."

All-America candidate Sonny Cortez hit his 21st home run of the season against LSU on May 3, setting a UT record for home runs in a season. he broke the previous mark held by Todd Helton (1995) and Chuck Barclift in 1980, each of whom hit 20 in a season. Cortez's 36 home runs for a career rank third on the UT career home run chart.

The first time he was injured, Cortez knew the season was not a loss, but the second injury was disappointing.

"I was not that disappointed the first time because I knew I could come back and play most all of the season," he said. "Then the second time I was injured, I really got down. But I knew I had to battle back."

He did more just than battle back.

The 24 home runs he knocked out this year are a Tennessee single-season record, breaking the record of 20 held by Todd Helton (1995) and Chuck Barclift (1980). His 87 RBI place him second on the single-season list behind Helton, who totaled 92 in 1995. Cortez also had 58 RBI in 1996 which is tied for eighth. His career total of 145 is sixth all-time at UT.

His career home run

total of 26 ranks sixth all time as well. His season batting average of .387 just missed making him only the 15th Vol to hit .400 in a season.

(But the Vols did add two names to the list of those who have hit .400 in a season. Jeff Pickler hit .445 to finish the regular season as the SEC leader, and Travis Copley likewise finished the regular season with a .419 average.)

Cortez credits his increase in power to his off-season weight program. In fact, all the Vols hit the weights hard in the off-season and all offensive numbers are up.

"Obviously my strength has helped me a lot," he said. "The whole team worked really hard on the weights during the off-season. I was also much smarter at the plate this year. Having not played last year, I was able to study pitchers and get a feel for what to do in certain situations. The injury was really like a blessing in disguise."

"It is challenging to play in the SEC and it just makes you that much better. Every game you have to be ready to play. Every team is solid from top to bottom. Every team has good pitchers and good hitters."

—Outfielder Sonny Cortez

The numbers are not just up, but practically every single-season offensive record was broken or was in jeopardy of being broken.

The home run record of 78 (1997) was shattered with a total of 107. The 271 extra-base hits surpassed the total of 252 established in 1997. The 33 sacrifice flies eclipsed the mark of 31 set in 1995.

It was the highest team batting average (.340) for a single season, and the highest slugging season for a season (.581). With this production the number of runs per game was also passed. The Vols scored 10.3 runs per game which is two more than the record of 8.3 set in 1997.

The 1998 Vols also set the standard for RBI in a season with 510 which topped the mark of 474 set in 1994. The Vol offense also had 1200 total bases which bettered the 1997 total of 1158.

"I knew we would be good offensively, but I did not think this good," Cortez said. "I am surprised at the kind of numbers we put up. We see all these records we are passing, but I did not expect to see that.

"But we have some people on the team that had phenomenal years. Jeff Pickler hit the ball as well as anybody and Travis Copley and Justin Ross also had good at bats time after time."

Pickler's year will also go down in the record books. He had the most hits ever for a Vol in a season with 109, which topped the record of 104 set by Helton in 1995. He also belted out 30 doubles which also set a new standard at Tennessee. He bettered Scott Schroeffel's 1996 total of 29.

Copley's numbers read .419 average, five home runs and 46 RBI. Ross carded a .374 average.

"My season has been really set-up by the people around me," he said. "I have some good people hitting around me and setting the table for me."

While Cortez has put up some solid numbers, he would like the team play to have been better.

"The season has been great from a personal standpoint but I would have liked to have seen the team do better," he said. "It is nice to have good numbers, but I always want the team to have success as well."

Cortez also gives credit for his success for playing in the SEC.

"It is challenging to play in the SEC and it just makes you that much better," he said. "Every game you have to be ready to play. Every team is solid from top to bottom. Every team has good pitchers and good hitters."

But no matter what happens, Cortez will also have a love for baseball.

"The whole lore of baseball is what makes the game so great," he said. "It has a great history and I certainly respect the game. All players for that matter have a respect for the game.

"Baseball is a game that is played with passion and it comes from within. Baseball players are not the best athletes. We are not the strongest, tallest or fastest but we all have a love for the game that drives us to compete. Guys like Jeff Pickler love the game and that is why they play."

—Rob Hardin

(**NOTE**: Both Cortez and Pickler were rewarded for their efforts as each was named All-SEC, while Pickler was also named SEC Player of the Year)

Diamond Vols Finish Season...

Sweep Over Vandy Not Enough!

The Vols did everything they possibly could do to extend their season in the final weekend of SEC play. Unfortunately they got no help from anyone else. The Vols needed South Carolina to take two of three from Kentucky in Lexington, coupled with the Vols needing two wins over the Commodores to propel Tennessee into the eight-team SEC Tournament format. The Vols held their end of the bargain, but the Gamecocks lost the first two games to Kentucky in extra innings.

The Vols took assault on the UT record books and combined for a total of 37 runs in three games, which averages out to a little more than their season average of just over 10 runs per game.

The first game of the series was critical for the Vols knowing they needed a good start to have a shot for the tournament.

They responded after a slow start in winning game one over the Commodores 12-6.

On the night, Tennessee bats were tuned into the records as All-America candidate Jeff Pickler tied Todd Helton's school-record for hits in a season with 105, and then broke the record that very same night in fashion with a solo blast to left-center. Pickler also went 3-for-4 including a double and a stolen base. Meanwhile, Sonny Cortez responded by extending his home run record with a solo shot, one of three round-trippers for him on the weekend.

Pitcher Kurt Scott, who headed into the weekend series second in the SEC in innings pitched with 95, went a strong 7.1 innings, giving up five runs, only three earned, while striking out five and walking three. With the win, Scott took the team lead in wins with six.

The Vols held a slim 6-5 lead heading into the bottom of the eighth inning when the floodgates opened, as the Vols plated six runners to put the game away. The big blast came off of the bat of Eduardo Figueroa who was had been slumping at the plate as of late. After the Vols had loaded the bases, Figueroa jumped on the first offering, knocking the ball deep into the night down the right field line, giving the Vols a seven run lead heading into the top of the ninth.

Clark Odom and Eric Henderson pitched the final inning and a third to close out the game.

Coming into game two of the series, the Vols already knew that kentucky had clinched the final playoff spot in the East, looked to Luke Hudson to get things going for Tennessee. And things did begin well for the Vols as Hudson was on key with his pitches, but a blister on his pitching hand caused him to leave the game in the third inning. Vandy responded by plating five runs on relief pitcher Justin Parker.

Down four runs, the Vols responded by plating four of their own in the bottom half of the inning to knot the score at five.

Donnie Ross replaced Parker in the fourth and went four pitched scoreless innings on his way to his third win on the season. Ross gave up two runs, both earned, on no hits and struck out seven in those four innings.

He got a lot of help from the Tennessee bats as the Josh Morris bases loaded bunt single and Justin Ross' three-run double in the seventh inning proved to be the difference.

Pickler added to his records as he hit his 30th double of the season breaking the old mark held by Scott Schroeffel (29) in 1996. Cortez hit his 23rd home run on the season, a two-run shot in the third.

Odom went the final 1.2 innings to get his sixth save on the season.

Sunday was Senior Day for the Vols as seven seniors were honored before the game. It was an emotional time as the Vols wanted to go out with a win in what would be their final game of the season.

Vanderbilt struck first as they plated a run on one hit in the first inning. The Vols responded with two runs of their own in the bottom half.

Senior Day brought the 1998 season to a close for the Tennessee Vol baseball squad, in which numerous offensive records were broken, and a career record of 175-75 for Vol seniors.

After Vandy had tied the score in the top of the second, the Vols responded by regaining the lead for good as Justin Ross tagged his 10th homer of the season, spotting the Vols a 3-2 lead.

Ross was equally up to the task on the mound as he went for win number six on the season. The win would also tie him for the team lead with teammate Kurt Scott.

Ross was strong early, as he settled down allowing only three Commodore runs until the seventh. Ross left in the seventh inning giving up six runs, all earned, while striking out five and walking three. Eric Henderson went the final two innings in relief allowing only one hit with one strikeout.

Offensively, the Vols continued their assault on the home run record, as they deposited four Vandy pitches over the fence, giving them 107 on the season. their previous high had been 78, which came last season.

Justin Ross began the air assault and was then followed by a three-run blast by Cortez in the fourth. Donnie Ross stepped to the plate and hit a solo shot in the fifth. Senior Jason Evans then stepped to the plate in the sixth and blasted his sixth home run, another three-run shot as part of four run sixth inning.

Michael Anderson collected a two-run single the third, and later hit his first triple on the season.

Henderson came on in relief of Justin Ross in the eighth and slammed the door on the Commodores.

With the win the Vols finished the season winners of four straight and a season record of 36-20, and 10-17 in SEC play. The Commodores fell to 25-28, and 6-24 in the SEC.

EXTRA INNINGS: *Seniors Recognized*- Seven seniors took to Lindsey Nelson Stadium one last time on Sunday in the final game of the season.

Seniors honored were: Michael Anderson, Nashville; Jason Clabo, Cleveland; Travis Copley, Hixson; Sonny Cortez, Long Beach, Calif.; Jason Evans, Winchester; Clark Odom, Quincy, Fla.; and Jeff Pickler, Santa Ana, Calif.

The seniors combined for a record of 175-75, an average of 43 win s a season. In their time here at Tennessee, the seniors helped place the Vols in only their second ever College World Series appearance (1995), went to three NCAA Regional Tournaments (1995-1997), won one SEC Tournament (1995), placed first twice in the SEC East (1995 and 1997), and one second-place finish (1996).

Several School Records Fall - The Vol baseball team broke several school records during the 1998 season.

As a team, the Vols shattered the home run mark, which had been 78 set in 1997. The Vols eclipsed that mark with an eye-popping 107.

Every Vol with more than one-at-bat had hit a home run, including 10 with at least five...They have 30 multi-home run games, including 17 with three or more...Three times they hit five in a game...They even hit for the home run cycle against Alabama on 4/11, collecting a solo, two-run, three-run, and a grand slam.

The Vols as a team were hitting an SEC-leading .340 heading into the Vanderbilt series, which was also a school record for average in a season...They collected 48 games with at least five runs, and had 41 of 53 games in which they had at least seven runs...They scored 20 runs on at least five occasions.

The Vols broke a total of 11 offensive records: home runs, batting average, runs, RBIs, doubles, extra base hits, total bases, slugging percentage, walks, runs per game, and sacrifice flys.

Individually, Jeff Pickler now owns the single-season school record in hits with 109...Holds the single season doubles mark with 30...Became only the fifth Vol to collect 200 career hits...And is tied for fourth in the SEC all-time with Todd Walker, LSU (1993) for hits in a season.

Sonny Cortez hit a school-record 24 home runs, a mark previously held by Todd Helton and Chuck Barclift (20 each). Cortez finished with 36 career homers, third on the UT list.

The Vols also had three players on the same squad who had collected their 200 career hit: Pickler, travis Copley, and Justin Ross.

1998 SEC Baseball Academic Honor Roll - A total of 66 student-athletes were named to the 1998 SEC Baseball Academic honor Roll by SEC Commissioner Roy Kramer on Thursday, May 7. The Vols placed four players on that list, headed by Jeff Pickler with a 3.70 in marketing. The other three Vols were: Travis Copley, 3.33, sport management; Jason Evans, 3.05, sport management; and Eduardo Figueroa, 3.20, sport management.

To be eligible for the award, a student-athlete must: 1) have a 3.0 GPA for either the past year (two semesters or three quarters) or for his career; 2) be a sophomore or higher in academic classification; and 3) have 24 semester or 26 quarter hours countable toward a degree.

—Donnell Field

Box Scores

Game 3

Vanderbilt	110 001 030 --6 9 2
Tennessee	213 314 00x --14 15 2

E- Kata 2(27), Morris (16). DP- Vanderbilt 2, Tennessee 1. LOB- Vanderbilt 6, Tennessee 6. 2B- Dykes (16), Meadows (6), Kropf (11). 3B- Anderson (1). HR- Adeeb (19), Dill (7) J. Ross (10), Cortez (24), D. Ross (13), Evans (6). SB- Kata (18), Geshke (1). Duke (2) SF- D. Ross (5). W- J. Ross (6-3). L- Seybt (2-3). Time- 2:31. Att- 1499.

Game 2

Vanderbilt	005 201 021 --10 12 4
Tennessee	014 101 40x --11 11 0

E- Kata (25), Kropf (11), Christensen (9), Yee (6). DP- Vanderbilt 1, Tennessee 2. LOB- Vanderbilt 11, Tennessee 6. 2B- Kata 2(19), Dill (10), kropf (10), J. Ross (22), Pickler (30). HR- Adeeb (18), Cortez (23). SB- J. Ross 2(18), Pickler (25), Clabo (4). W- D. Ross (3-0). L- Yee (5-3). SV- Odom (6). Time- 3:32. Att- 1517.

Game 1

Vanderbilt	201 000 021 --6 8 5
Tennessee	102 102 06x --12 11 1

E- Kata (24), Dill (6), Christensen 2(8), Keene (16). DP- Vanderbilt 2, Tennessee 1. LOB- Vanderbilt 8, Tennessee 9. 2B- Dykes (15), Adeeb (13), Pickler (29), Cortez (20), Parker (7). HR- Kata (3) mEadows (12), Pickler (7), Cortez (22), Figueroa (7), Morris (9). SB- Johnston (6), Meadows 2(13), Pickler (24). CS- J. Ross (6). SH- Morris (9). W- Scott (6-6). L- Snow (5-7). Time- 2:45. Att- 1314.

Georgia State	005 110 000 --5 9 1
Tennessee	230 100 00x --6 5 1

Game 3

Tennessee	000 100 024 --7 9 2
LSU	050 101 01x --8 10 3

E- Copley (1), Morris (15), Barbier (14), McClure (10), Dalton (19). LOB- Tennessee 9, LSU 6. 2B- D. Ross (7), Davis (9), Dalton (7). HR- Cortez (21), Clabo (6), Higgins (9). SB- Pickler 2(22), Davis (5), Dalton (24). CS- Clabo (1). SH- Harris (6). SF- Dalton (3). W- Thompson (9-2). L- J. Ross (5-3). SV- Bowe (1). Time- 2:36. Att- 6815.

Game 2

Tennessee	120 000 081 --12 19 0
LSU	224 001 114 --15 16 1

E- Barbier (3). DP- Tennessee 1, LSU 3. LOB- Tennessee 5, LSU 9. 2B- Pickler 2(28), Cortez (19), Keene (13), Copley (15), Barbier (9). HR- J. Ross (9), Keene (10), Barbier (7), McClure (22), Furniss 2(22), Dalton (2). SB- Davis (4), Barbier (5), Dalton 23). SH- Morris (8). SF- Cresse (2). W- Demouy (4-2). L- Odom (4-3). Time- 3:25. Att- 6897.

Game 1

Tennessee	101 100 000 --3 10 1
LSU	200 110 00x --4 10 1

E- Morris (14), Bennett (1). DP- Tennessee 2, LSU 1. LOB- Tennessee 9, LSU 8. 2B- J. Ross (21), Pickler (26), Cortez (18), Keene (12). 3B- Furniss (3). SB- Copley (3), Parker (1), Dalton (22). CS- Dalton (3). W- Esteves (8-1). L- Scott (5-6). SV- Demouy (3). Time- 2:40. Att- 6951.

Bill Johnson... Comments from 1998 Senior Luncheon

It is hard for me to realize that forty years ago I was sitting there where you are. Forty years ago I was a senior getting ready to leave the University of Tennessee. I had a great experience here. I loved the academic side and the athletic side of The University. I hated to leave the University of Tennessee.

And I have got to tell you that one of the best decisions of my life was deciding to come here on a football scholarship. It was a great decision for three reasons. Number one, I got a quality education. I got a bachelor's of science degree in finance. I will put a Tennessee degree up against anybody. You can get a quality education. Secondly, I had the opportunity to play in an outstanding athletic program, and I totally enjoyed everything that happened to me here. Thirdly, and you all are going to realize this as the days go by, the teammates, associates and friends that I made here have been a tremendous value to me, professionally and personally.

I can't tell you how many doors I have had opened to me because I played football or because I was an athlete at the University of Tennessee. Tennessee people or the people that follow the University of Tennessee, never forget.

I truly feel like that I owe the University of Tennessee a debt that I can never repay. And I hope that you all will feel that way as you leave here too. I have tried to repay that debt, but I don't think I will ever make it.

I thought I would speak to you for just a few moments on a subject that I might call "A blueprint to a meaningful life." You all are 21 or 22-years old and you young men and young women are getting ready to go out into your lives and you know more right now than you are ever going to know in your whole life. At 21 years of age you know more right now than you will ever know because you have the answer to every question right now. But there will be some that pop up down the road that you are not quite so sure of.

I wish that somebody had told me this when I was 21 years old. And that is what I try to reflect on. You have your own ideas right now what is really important; your career, making money, your family, and your health. You have a lot of priorities in your own mind right now as you move out into your professional career. These are not my thoughts but these are somebody else's thoughts on what is the best course of action to take to have a meaningful life.

Do not think of yourself more highly than you should. Work hard and do not be lazy. That might come out of Pat Summitt's book *"Reaching for the Summit."* Show respect for one another. Be patient in your troubles. Share your belongings. Be happy with those who are happy and weep with those who weep. Do not be proud, accept humble views, and associate with the lonely. Try to do what everyone considers to be good. Who knows the book or the author that those sound bites came from? Anybody got an idea? It came from the New Testament, from the 12th chapter of Romans, which of the whole bible, is my favorite chapter.

Sometimes now we worry about being politically correct, but I thought about what I wanted to say and I thought I could get a book by Vince Lombardi, or I could get a lot of good inspirational books and get a lot of good thoughts to put to you, but you know there is no better place than The Bible. The Bible is the source of wisdom. I am not standing here today as a preacher or a spiritual leader, I am just telling you that I have received the best information and the best game plan that I have got from The Bible, and particularly from the 12th chapter of Romans. And all of these things that I read to you a while ago about what you should do and how you should conduct yourself are correct. In America today the sign of success is an accumulation of whether or not you live in a big house, drive a Mercedes, or if you wear fine clothes, then you are a success.

But let me tell you, that ain't the deal. In that chapter, talking about athletics, it talks about there being many parts to the body and they are really comparing it to the human body. The human body has a lot of different parts and each one of those parts performs a different function. And they all have to function together for you to feel well and to participate. And as athletes you know that. You get a torn Achilles, it slows you down. Even if you get your little toe hurt, or turf toe, it hurts your performance, so the smallest part has an influence on how your body functions. And that's what Paul was talking about in Romans, is we have to all work together to make a team. Whether it be football, or basketball, or track or baseball or whatever, all different parts of the team have to function for the whole to succeed.

And all of us are not going to be rocket scientist, or financiers, lawyers, doctors or Indian chiefs, but you individually have specific talents that you need to make the most of. In Romans it says that if your talent is to teach then you should teach; if it is to serve then you should serve. You know this is something that everybody can do, but we miss the boat in doing this; if your talent is just to encourage other people, to me that is the greatest talent going. Don't we think well of people who have a good word to say for us, encourage us, and try to build us up rather than the people that try to tear us down. If your talent is to encourage other people, then you need to do that.

You need to share with others generously. You need to share with other people generously. Not begrudgingly, but generously. You need to show kindness to others. We need to show kindness cheerfully. You know there is one verse in there that really comes back to play with me. It says "do not let evil defeat you, instead conquer evil with good." Now for you football players, and I am sure we still do it, General Neyland years ago came up with what he called the Tennessee football game maxims. A lot of them had to do with the technicalities of football, but the coach who was the football coach here when I played, Bowden Wyatt, the last game maxim that he gave us before we went out onto the field went like this: "When the game or the breaks go against you, don't slow down or get rattled, put on more steam." And that is what Paul was saying to us here when he said "Don't let evil defeat you, instead conquer evil with good."

So when you get out of here, if things don't go your way, don't slow down or get rattled, just put on more steam. And don't let evil overcome you, whatever form evil may take, whether it is economic adversity, physical adversity or spiritual adversity, overcome evil with good.

There are some things that are beyond us. And we have to have a blueprint, and we have to have a gameplan to help us through those times.

And as far as looking down the road, whether it was as an athlete or as a student, I truly believe that the quality of your life at the end of the day or at the of your life is not going to be measured by what you take out of life, but by what you give. There are a lot of takers out there and very few givers. I hope that you all will be givers. Regardless of your religion or your beliefs, I don't believe that you can find anywhere a more concise and meaningful blueprint for your life than in the 12th chapter of Romans. If you can latch on to that gameplan now at this point in your life, there is no doubt that you will have a fulfilling and meaningful life.

—Bill Johnson

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2 Lady Vols champs T-shirt (white or gray) M-XXL $17

3 Headlines T-shirt M-XXL $22

4 3-in-a-row Adult T-shirt M-XXL $22 Kids T-shirt M-L $17 Adult sweat shirt M-XXL $36

5 Adidas T-shirt (front and back print) M-XXL $22

6 Coffee mug $10

7 Ash National Champs shirt (front and back print) Kids T-shirt M, L, XL $19 Adult sweat shirt M-XXL $31

8 3-in-a-row hat (white/orange or off white/denim) $21

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10 Orange wind shirt M-XXL $65

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Tennessee Tradition...

Ben Byrd on the Vols... A Look at Scholar-Athletes!

The notion that athletics and academics are incompatible on the college campus has long since been disproved.

At the University of Tennessee, there have always been athletes who have excelled in the classroom as well as on the fields of friendly strife. Somehow these outstanding scholar-athletes managed to meet the rigorous demands imposed on them on two fronts at the same time.

The first example that comes to mind is Nathan W. Dougherty, who was an All-Southern guard on the Vol football teams of 1906-09 and was later elected to the College Football Hall of Fame. Dougherty was such a brilliant engineering student that he later served for many years as the Dean of the College of Engineering. But even while he held down that lofty academic post he still found time to wear a second hat as faculty chairman of the UT Athletics Board. Among other things, he helped found the Southeastern Conference, took a leading role in NCAA matters, and hired a young West Pointer named Bob Neyland to coach the football team.

I recall asking Dean Dougherty how he would like to be remembered.

"As an engineer and a teacher," he said.

He got his wish. The College of Engineering Building is named in his honor.

Another notable example of brains on the gridiron was a late 1920s back named Everett Derryberry. One of three brothers, all of whom were varsity athletes as well as scholars, Everett Derryberry won a Rhodes Scholarship for academic brilliance. The story goes that friends once persuaded him to go to a Vol basketball game on a night when he had to prepare for a big test the next day. He took his books with him and never looked up to see what all the yelling was about. In later years, he served as president of Tennessee Technological University.

They didn't start selecting Academic All-America footballers until 1954, and a Tennessee player was the second SEC player to win that honor. Charles Rader was hardly the big dumb tackle of legend and lore. A straight-A chemistry major, Rader not only won Academic All-America honors in 1956, but was also named to three consecutive Academic All-SEC teams, 1954, 1955 and 1956.

Since Rader's time, seven other Vol gridders have been named Academic All-America -- guard Bill Johnson (1957), business administration; tackle Mack Gentry (1965), business administration; center Bob Johnson (1967), industrial engineering; defensive back Tim Priest (1970), pre-law; tackle Tim Irwin (1980), pre-law; end Mike Terry (1982), business administration; and, most recently, quarterback Peyton Manning (1997), communications.

More than 140 football Vols have been named to Academic All-SEC teams since 1954, including some two- and three-time honorees. And the list grows much longer when the other men's sports are included.

Without exception, the Vol Academic All-Americas have gone on to success in the big world beyond college, and most of them have retained their ties with football in some capacity. Bill Johnson was a member of the school's Board of Trustees. Bob Johnson enjoyed a long career with Cincinnati Bengals before setting up his own business concern in the Queen City. Gentry is a Knoxville lawyer and veteran SEC official. Priest, also a Knoxville lawyer, appears regularly on radio show dealing with UT football. Irwin played with the Minnesota Vikings before returning to Knoxville to set up his law practice.

This is not to say that there haven't been athletes at UT, and everywhere else, who were somewhat shy of scholastic brilliance. But the same could be said of a great many non-athlete students. I suspect that grade point averages and graduation rates among athletes and lay students would come out fairly close to even at most schools. As things have turned out, brains and brawn go together pretty well.

Former Vol

Mel Purcell (1980)

Mel Purcell came to UT from Murray, Ky., via Memphis State, and lettered in 1980.

During his time as a Vol, he teamed with Rodney Harmon to capture the NCAA Doubles Championship and received All-America honors in both singles and doubles in 1980. He was also an All-SEC selection that year, winning the No. 1 singles competition.

He finished the season finished sixth in the Coaches Poll and led the Vols to their first SEC Championship since 1970. He also won the 1979 NCAA Indoor Singles Championship and was a member of the 21-and-under David Cup team.

His regular season doubles record was 18-1 and his singles record was 17-3.He was the 1980 ATP Rookie of the Year and a 1983 Wimbledon singles quarterfinalist. He is now tennis coach at Murray State University in his hometown.

Murray, Kentucky's, Mel Purcell did it all for the Vol tennis program during his time on campus, including an SEC and NCAA crown.

This month's spotlight on the Lady Vols profile looks at members of the Lady Vol rowing squad and softball team.

MICHELLE MOORE
Sophomore
Physical Therapy
Hixson

Although Michelle Moore had a sound first season in the Orange and White, the sophomore made one of the biggest leaps in improvement from last year to this year on the Lady Vol rowing team. Consequently, for the second time in her rowing career, she was recognized with a team MVP award.

As a senior at Girls Preparatory in Chattanooga, the Hixson native captured MVP honors. After her sophomore season at the University of Tennessee, the coaching staff also recognized her achievements and named her as the Lady Vol Openweight Oarswoman of the Year.

A member of the top Varsity 8+ all season, Moore also rowed with the top Varsity 4+ for most of the spring. She had her best outing at the Tennessee Cup, where she was a double winner in the Varsity 8+ and 4+. She also collected a bronze aboard the Varsity 4+ at the George Washington Invitational Crew Classic.

To open the season, Moore helped the Open 8+ finish second and the Open 4+ place fourth at the Chattanooga Head Race. She followed with a silver in the Open 8+ at the Head of the Tennessee and was third in the Championship 8+ of the Head of the Chattahoochee.

Her first year in the Orange and White was equally as successful as a member of the first Novice 8+. Among her crew's accomplishments that season were seven first-place finishes, including an undefeated fall campaign.

A two-time Lady Vol Honor Roll and Dean's List member, Moore is majoring in physical therapy.

SARAH AYRES
Junior
Childhood Education
Roseville, Calif.

After posting the second-most wins in a season in the Lady Vol softball program's history, junior pitcher Sarah Ayres was named by the coaching staff as the team's Athlete of the Year. The Roseville, Calif., native collected a 21-17 record entering the SEC Tournament, with team highs in shutouts with six, strikeouts with 96, complete games with 30 and only 29 walks in 250.2 innings.

The right-hander also notched a 2.23 earned run average and was the winning pitcher in victories against then-third-ranked Washington, 22nd-ranked Kansas and regionally-ranked Chattanooga.

In the SEC, Ayres was able to pick up wins against Western Division runner-up Alabama, plus defending regular-season and tournament champion South Carolina. She is third in the conference in walks per seven innings, fourth in complete games, fifth in wins and seventh in strikeouts.

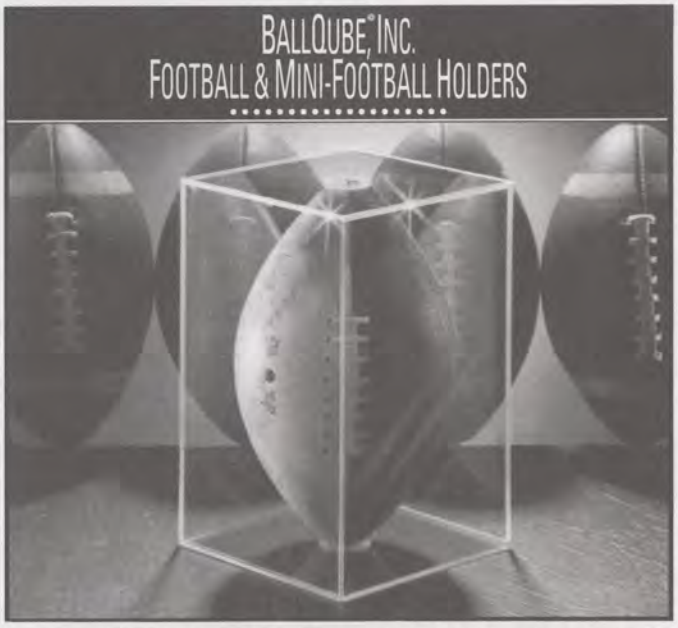
Because of injuries this season, Ayres was heavily relied upon. During one stretch, she threw in a school-record 46.1 consecutive innings.

Her best outing of the season came in a 5-0 win over Wisconsin-Green Bay, in which she notched a team season-high seven strikeouts and had no walks in a one-hit shutout at the Lady Vol Spring Invitational.

A one-time transfer from Sacramento City Community College, Ayres posted an 11-3 mark with five wins coming via shutout, a 1.93 ERA and 41 strikeouts last year in her first season in Knoxville.

Recently, the early childhood education major earned her first Academic All-SEC award.

—Brad Laux



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This Week In Big Orange Country

VOLS CLAIM GATORADE TITLE

Tennessee's men's track and field program stretched its home dual-meet winning streak to 29 with its team win in the 1998 Gatorade Track Classic. The Vols scored 74 points in the meet against Illinois with 47 points, Auburn with 45 points and Kentucky with 40 points. The Vols have not lost an outdoor dual meet since 1970 when Indiana took a rare win out of Knoxville.

The first running action of the meet took place in the 4x100M relay. There, Auburn scooted to the win in a time of 40.03. Tennessee's Tyrone Graham, Dawane Wallace, Justin Devine and Geno Devane finished in second place in 41.16 which stands as the third-best time of the season for a Vol 400M relay team.

Doug Ellington ran to a second-place finish in the 1500M run for the vols with his time of 3:52.01. He now leads all Tennessee times in the event for 1998.

In the 110M hurdles, the Vols posted their first win of the day. Wallace cruised to a finish of 13.74(w). Also in the event, Grant Cleghorn finished in fourth in a season-best time of 14.25, while Anthony Thompson finished in fifth with a season-best time of 14.33. The only Tennessee athlete in the event came in Graham as he placed fourth with a time of 10.59.

Tennessee saw two athletes post season-best times in the 800M run. John Dickson finished in fifth place with his time of 1:51.54. He now leads all Tennessee times in the event for the year. Dickson's teammate Hendrix-Buxton crossed the tape in a time of 1:55.08 which was also his season best. Cleghorn continued his hold on Tennessee's top times in the 400M hurdles.

The Vols kept their lead in the meet steady as Devine crossed the wire with a second-place finish in the 200M dash and a time of 21.27. In the 3000M steeplechase, Tennessee extended its lead in points as Joe dickson improved his season-best time in the event with a second-place time of 9:38.38. Also in the event was Brian Wallace with a time of 10:07.07. The final running event of the meet came down to the 1600M relay. There, the Tennessee team of Devine, Wallace, Wheatley and Wallace secured the meet win for the Vols when they finished in fourth place in a time of 3:15.96.

In field action, Tennessee led the way with a one, two, three finish in the shot put. Aaron Ausmus posted his first win of the season in the event with his throw of 58-7 1/2. Finishing second was the Vols' Darwin Walker who had a toss of 56-5 1/4, while teammate Wes Boudreau finished in third with a throw of 54-9 1/4. Diondre Jackson led the way for Tennessee in the triple jump with his leap of 44-11, a season-high mark.

The discus proved to be a strong event for the Vols as they grabbed six points with finishes of second, third and fourth. Scott Perkinson grabbed second place with his throw of 171-11. Fellow Vol Lance Jauron placed third with a season-high mark of 170-8, while Aaron Ausmus finished in fourth with a toss of 169-4.

Tim Bell grabbed the win in the high jump with a leap of 7-1, while Jackson placed second with a season-high mark of 7-1.

The final field event on the day for Tennessee came in the pole vault where Russell Johnson once again blew the field away with a jump of 18-1 3/4 and the win. In addition to Johnson, Andy Knight tied for fourth with teammate Tim O'Hare as each posted a mark of 15-2 1/4.

Russell Johnson captured the pole vault title at the Gatorade Classic..

—Chad King

NORRIS SELECTED TO NCAA LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION

Two athletes from the University of Tennessee were selected recently to participate in the 1998 NCAA Foundation Leadership Conference. Junior softball player Kenyail Norris was the sole representative from the Lady Vols chosen to attend the second-annual conference presented by the Entergy Corporation from May 25-28 at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Fla. Norris and John Dickson, of the men's track team, were two of 370 student-athletes picked from 224 universities.

The criteria for the selections were based on athletic and academic performance, community service and leadership skills. The conference is part of the NCAA CHAMPS/Life Skills program. Those chosen will participate in a discussion of issues based on college athletics, while enhancing their leadership skills and promoting better communication between student-athletes and athletic administrators, coaches and university faculty.

"I am glad to have the opportunity, since so many people applied for it," said Norris. "I am very excited about going. As a senior next year, I hope to bring back leadership skills for my team and for the University to hopefully implement in the years' ahead."

Norris' ability in the classroom and on the field earned her recognition from the NCAA.

A three-year starting left fielder for Jim Beitia's softball team, Norris has put together another outstanding season. She was named to the All-SEC second team for the first time in her career after having her best season yet. Entering the SEC Tournament, she is hitting .316 with 42 runs scored and 36 RBI. In the league, she finished as the leader in walks with 30, tied for seventh in runs and ranked fifth in both RBI and triples (five).

Starting every game of the year for the second time in her career, she helped the Lady Vols to a 36-29 overall record and a 13-15 mark in the SEC. In addition, she also posted a team-best 14 stolen bases in 15 attempts and was second best in slugging percentage (.472) and on base percentage (.412).

For her career, she is hitting .338 and has 114 total RBI. This year, she has collected her season highs in at bats, triples and walks and has also tied her top mark in home runs. This spring's total of 14 stolen bases are also a school record, while she still holds the mark for single-game stolen bases with three set in 1997.

A recipient of the prestigious Whittle Scholarship, Norris has a 3.28 in engineering science with specialization in bio-medical engineering. Last fall, she spent the semester serving out a co-op at Sulzer Orthopedics modeling and drafting custom-made surgical implants. Her impressive academic credentials earned her a position on the Academic All-SEC team for the second straight year, while also notching her third Lady Vol Honor Roll accolade.

In addition to excelling in academics and athletics, Norris has spent the last two year's mentoring to three students at Beaumont Elementary School. She has also participated in the Leadership Quest program and has performed numerous other volunteer community service functions.

"The recognition speaks well of her as a person and how she has been able to excel at everything she has done here at UT," said Beitia. "She has many activities that take up her time and it just shows what kind of a person she is to be able to balance her academics, athletics, community service and leadership. She has a bright future ahead of her."

—Brad Laux

1998 COCA-COLA BIG ORANGE CARAVAN...

GOING DOWN HOME STRETCH!

The tenth annual Coca-Cola Big Orange Caravan began its 13-stop tour April 24 at Eagles Landing in Sevier County. The Caravan is criss-crossing the state in late April and May and will also make stops in Atlanta and Birmingham.

"The Caravan is a great opportunity for Vol fans to meet Phillip Fulmer, Jerry Green and other staff members face-to-face, and get a snapshot or autograph," said UT Associate Athletic Director Mike Hamilton, coordinator of the event. "Our coaches always enjoy sharing their previews of the upcoming season with Vol fans across the state."

A day of golf with Fulmer, Green and other Vol coaches and staff members will begin in the early afternoon in most locations. A dinner or reception will follow, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Coca-Cola is the official sponsor of the 1998 Caravan.

Persons interested in participating in the golf tournaments should call the local contacts listed below. Those who would like to attend only the evening dinner/programs should call the UT Development Office (423) 974-3011 for more information.

The 1998 Coca-Cola Big Orange Caravan

Date	City	Location	Golf Contact/Phone
April 24	Sevierville	Eagles Landing 1 p.m.	Allen Newton (423)428-2212
April 27	Jackson	Hidden Valley CC 12 noon ***	John New (901)664-4435/422-4282
April 28	Memphis	Wyndyke CC 12 p.m.***	Jana Fuqua (901)372-3876
May 5	Cookeville	Cookeville CC 12 noon ***	Mike Phipps (931)526-5904
May 6	Morristown	Millstone CC 1 p.m.***	George McGuffin (423)587-5711
May 7	Cleveland	Cleveland CC 12 noon ***	Paul Bacon (423)336-5370
May 11	Clarksville	Clarksville CC 12 noon ***	Bill Hoy (931)522-4314
May 12	Nashville	Hermitage Golf Club 1:30 p.m.***	Terry Smith (615)244-2130
May 13	Franklin	The Legends Golf Club 1:30 p.m.***	Steve Kroeger (615)874-2288
May 14	Lewisburg	Saddle Creek Golf Club 1 p.m.	Joe Brandon (931)359-4897
May 18	Chattanooga	Signal Mountain CC 1 p.m.***	Claire Stone (423)974-1218
May 19	Atlanta	Towne Lake Hills Golf Club 12 noon	Allen Vaughn (770)516-8657
May 20	Birmingham	Chace Lake CC 1:30 p.m.***	Jim Sledge (205)942-9604

(All Times Local)

****** Spikeless Shoes Only***

NOTE TO MEDIA: UT coaches and staff will be available for interviews for 30 minutes beginning 1 1/2 hours prior to the scheduled tee time (10:30 - 11:00 a.m. for a noon tee time) and after the golf tournament from approximately 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. local time. For more information regarding advance publicity or media interview opportunities, contact Associate SID David Grim or Tom Mattingly at (423) 974-1212.

VASF News and Notes

Season Football Parking Pass Applications Due June 1

Applications for VASF donation-based 1998 season football parking passes were mailed in early May to donors at the Ridgerunner level and above. All parking will be assigned using a donor's rank as of March 1 of each year. The cards are due in the VASF office by June 1, 1998.

Be sure to read all enclosed information carefully.

Each donor's rank is listed on the left side of the application. Please list your top four choices for parking lots from the groups available to you. Do not order lots not listed on your application. If you list the agricultural campus as your first lot choice, only send $36 payment as you should receive that lot. Applications received with only $36 payment will automatically be listed with the agricultural lot as that donor's first choice.

If you receive your football parking pass priority through the University's Alumni Affairs & Annual Giving recognition clubs, you will receive an application in late June. Contact Claire Stone in the VASF office at (423) 974-1218 or Susie Orr in the Office of Alumni Affairs & Annual Giving at (423) 974-3011 for more information.

The Volunteer of the Year, the top individual Fund Drive worker, Gary Rowcliffe (right), and Fund Drive Rookie of the Year Mike Smith (left), are pictured with John Currie, Executive Director of the VASF at this year's worker luncheon on April 18 in Circle Park. Photo by Claire Stone.

VASF Thanks & Honors the 1998 Fund Drive Workers at Annual Orange & White Day Luncheon

Despite the rainy start to the day, more than 100 Fund Drive workers and their families attended the annual Fund Drive Worker Luncheon in Circle Park in the heart of Tennessee's campus on Saturday, April 18. On this Orange and White football spring scrimmage day, these Volunteers in the truest sense of the word found time to come and be honored for their achievements supporting Tennessee's student-athletes. They also received their prizes and VASF T-shirts before heading off to other football gameday activities.

Stroud's Barbeque provided the wonderful food on this day devoted to thanking the 1998 Fund Drive workers for all their efforts on behalf of Volunteer student-athletes.

Each year, the VASF holds the Volunteer Athletic Scholarship Fund Drive to help recruit new VASF members, as well as renew existing memberships in the VASF. Workers are current VASF donors who volunteer their time to help promote Tennessee's student-athletes. And it works; Fund Drive workers' efforts accounted for more than $500,000 in new donations for the 1998 campaign. Workers are divided by geographic region of the state into teams and are given special support from VASF staffers. Staff members also visit each team at least twice during the two-month fund drive period in January and February.

The winning team receives the honor to "run through the T" with the Volunteers at a football game this fall. This year a new set of faces will experience the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity as they raised $130,148.64 for Volunteer student-athletes. Members of the Knoxville team, headed by Gary Rowcliffe, were excited to learn that they had won. Among other winners announced at the luncheon hosted by the UTAD were the Volunteer of the Year, the top Fund Drive worker (Gary Rowcliffe), and the Fund Drive Rookie of the Year, the most productive newcomer (Mike Smith). This year's Fund Drive saw the incorporation of a new medium--the internet. Rowcliffe's world wide web home page proved to be the difference in this year's campaign as donors from as far away as California joined the VASF using his web page.

Following the meal, Tennessee Athletics Director Doug Dickey thanked all workers and VASF contributors, both past and present, for their continued support and dedication to Tennessee's student-athletes, as well as UT's scholarship endowments and facilities improvements goals.

—Steve Sams

Volunteer of the Year
Gary Rowcliffe $68,082.00

Top Fund Drive Individuals
Gary Rowcliffe $68,082.00
Pete & Carole Kutz $55,829.00
Billy Mitchell $37,109.92
Larry & Darlene Eley $34,540.43
Jack Clark $31,530.00
Billy Dwight Smith $21,581.00
Chuck & Robin McCollum $18,449.00
Homer Holdredge $13,446.00

Fund Drive Rookie of the Year
Mike Smith $6,050.00

Top Fund Drive Teams
Gary Rowcliffe (Knoxville)
$130,148.64
Pete Kutz (Nashville)
$119,050.43
Cathy Ashby (Chattanooga)
$73,666.68
Jeanne Trewhitt (Chattanooga)
$49,226.17

The Last Word...

DICKEY TO RECEIVE TONER AWARD IN NEW YORK!

This past month, UT Athletic Director Doug Dickey was named the winner of the 1998 John L. Toner Awards, instituted in 1997 to honor a collegiate athletic director who has demonstrated superior administrative abilities, especially in the area of college football. The award will be presented in New York City Dec. 7 as part of the annual awards ceremonies of the National Football Foundation and College Football Hall of Fame.

It hardly seems like 35 years this December that Dickey came to Knoxville on the night train from Memphis (wasn't that also a song title?) to be announced the next morning as the Vols' new head coach. The year was 1963. Dickey was Bob Woodruff's choice to lead the Vols out of the football wilderness back into national prominence. That's exactly what happened.

Thirty-five years is a long time, but the memories are still fresh. The Vols finished 4-5-1 in his first season, but better times were ahead. The Dickey years after that saw the Vols win 42 games, lose 10 and tie three. There were appearances in the Bluebonnet Bowl, Gator Bowl (twice), Orange Bowl and Cotton Bowl. There were two SEC Championships. There were 14 All-America selections and 22 All-SEC selections. Two players of that time, Steve DeLong and Bob Johnson, are now enshrined in the College Football Hall of Fame.

It was a great time to be a Vol fan. Dickey wasted no time in putting the Vols back in the hunt on a national level. The 1965 team finished 8-1-2 in one of the most exciting seasons ever on the Hill. The Vols tied Auburn and Alabama, lost to Mississippi by 14-13 and beat everybody else who showed up. Tennessee was back

The 1965 season and its aftermath proved that beyond a shadow of a doubt. Tennessee, which hadn't defeated Alabama since 1960, had fought the Tide to a 7-7 deadlock for 59 minutes and escaped with the inspirational tie when Snake Stabler, a marvelous option quarterback when he had two good knees, lost track of the downs and turned the ball over, thinking he was killing the clock for a chip shot field goal that would have won the game.

AD Doug Dickey is the 1998 John L. Toner award winner, to be honored Dec. 7-8 in New York City.

In this midst of the upturn in Vol fortunes, two days later, on a foggy Monday morning, three Vol coaches, Bill Majors, Bob Jones and Charley Rash, were killed in a car-train wreck at a West Knoxville grade crossing. The Vol program was shaken to its foundation.

DIckey led his troops through the valley of the shadow and earned the respect of thoughtful people with the way he handled the whole matter.

Dickey returned as AD in 1985 and immediately began playing a key role in helping the University maintain its long-standing position among the nation's leading football powers. His stadium enlargement program has resulted in increased seating capacity of Neyland Stadium to 102,544, making it the largest on-campus football arena in the nation. The average attendance at UT's home games this past season was 106,538 an all-time national record.

Dickey implemented a scholarship fund drive which has increased UT's level of giving from approximately $800,000 to more than seven million dollars annually. He presides over a sports program which generates about $38 million in annual income and enables Tennessee to compete for national championships on a consistent basis. As a head coach and athletic director, Coach Dickey has been involved in 21 college football bowl games.

His contributions to football are numerous. He served for six years on the college football rules committee, including three years as chairman and, since 1992, has been a member of the board of the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment. He is currently serving on the NCAA Football Issues Committee, the NCAA Competition Cabinet and the NCAA Certification Committee. He has been instrumental in helping arrange lucrative television contracts through his work with SEC Commissioner Roy Kramer and his fellow athletic directors.

A personal note or two. If you've been with us for any length of time, you'll know that the Dickey coaching years at Tennessee are among my favorites. I have told you about watching the "Doug Dickey Show" on Sunday afternoons (1 p.m., WATE-TV) with Bill Dyer's DyerGram at the ready. I have told you about football trips that began mid-Friday and sometimes didn't end until late Sunday night.

If we could, we all have our wish to go back in time. My choice would be to go back to Neyland Stadium, or anyplace else the Vols played, during the Dickey years. I'd like to experience the thrill of the 1967 Alabama game one more time.

I'd like to watch John and Chip Kell, Steve Kiner and Jack Reynolds, and Curt Watson and Richard Pickens do their thing one more time.

Can we, but for a fleeting moment, turn back the hands of time? Could Bill Dyer draw but one more DyerGram?

Could it have really been 35 years since it all started? Say it ain't so. Please.

— Tom Mattingly

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